

# Waterway Views

Summer 2000

The Quarterly Newsletter of the Haywood Waterways Association, Inc.

## LAKE JUNALUSKA A VISION AT RISK

The vision of several Haywood County families created a place of beauty, enrichment, and economic benefit for western North Carolina. The land for the Southern Assembly Grounds (now Lake Junaluska Assembly) was purchased in 1910. The Lake was completed in 1914.

People have been coming to Lake Junaluska ever since. It has hosted hundreds of thousands of visitors to our area. Area residents also enjoy the hiking trails, concerts, festivals, celebrations, and other activities. Lake Junaluska is a part of our sense of place – it helps set our area apart, and makes it special.

Lake Junaluska also generates significant economic benefits for western North Carolina. The total economic impact from payrolls, general expenditures, property taxes, and tourism revenues is estimated to exceed \$30 million/year.

The existence of Lake Junaluska as we know it is at risk. The villain's name is mud – or more accurately, sediment from upstream erosion in the Lake Junaluska watershed (primarily Richland Creek). This sediment threatens the existence of this 200-acre lake.

Sedimentation is a common issue for all reservoirs. For almost 90 years, the Assembly kept up with this problem. They removed between 400,000 and 500,000 cubic yards of sediment in 1964. In 1973, another 391,000 cubic yards were removed.

The Assembly currently spends \$25,000 per year to remove some of the more recent sediment at the mouth of Richland Creek. However, sediment is arriving at such a rate that this work does not begin to keep up with the



Removing silt from Lake Junaluska

deposition. Major portions of the lake will be lost in the next 16 months unless substantial quantities of silt are removed.

Long term resolution of this problem requires technical assistance and money for two purposes. The immediate need is to remove the silt from the most threatened portion of the lake (the west end of the reservoir). This estimated cost is \$750,000. Removing all the sediment from the lake could cost over \$2 million.

The long-term issue is to reduce the rate of sedimentation in Lake Junaluska. TVA recently completed a contract with Haywood Waterways Association to identify the sources of non-point pollution in the Pigeon River watershed. Eroding stream banks and unpaved roads contribute over 75 percent of the sediment in the watershed supplying most of the water to Lake Junaluska (Richland Creek).

It is technically possible to restore the lake while reducing future non-point pollution in the Richland Creek watershed. It also makes economic sense. Failure to act will have substantial and long-term adverse

consequences. Solving the problems will allow many generations to continue to enjoy and benefit from the special place we know as Lake Junaluska.

### Kids Gain Hands-On Experience



This year several changes were made to the Kids in the Creek program. Due to a statewide curriculum change, the program was moved to eighth grade. We increased the emphasis on Best Management Practices and added a hands-on-work component to give students an

*Continued on back page*

# Save the Lake - Part II



In our last newsletter I mentioned the wonderful grassroots effort to Save Lake Logan. Several of our members were involved in this effort to protect one of the county's most valuable water resources. Now it's time to do it again and restore the special place that is Lake Junaluska.

Several months ago officials at the Lake Junaluska Assembly organized a meeting of key community leaders to announce that the Lake was filling up fast with sediment and there was a real threat of losing the Lake. Haywood

County can not afford to lose this valuable natural resource and economic asset. The Lake is enjoyed by thousands of residents and visitors and generates millions of dollars of revenue for the county. Lake officials pleaded with community leaders to help save the lake. This is an expensive undertaking. While privately owned, the Lake is a community resource and the solution to the Lake's problems will require a community effort.

The sediment in the Lake is flowing in from the Richland Creek watershed. The sources are many and varied - eroding stream banks, roads and ditchlines, construction sites, and even the small bare areas in our own yards! We all must do a better job of preventing soil erosion and controlling sedimentation. The Lake will benefit as well as all the streams in the Richland Creek watershed including Allens Creek, Camp Branch, Hyatt Creek, Plott Creek, Eagle Nest Creek, Raccoon Creek, Factory Branch and others. HWA pledges its support for this effort. We will work with the Assembly, town and county officials, the Soil and Water Conservation District, and other partners to address the Lake's problems. Let's all remember to do our part! This is a resource we must preserve!

**Bill Eaker**

*Bill Eaker, President  
Haywood Waterways Association, Inc.*

# HWA Vists Coweeta Hydrologic Laboratory



HWA members and partners visited the Coweeta Hydrologic Laboratory at Otto, NC on April 7. This USDA-Forest Service research facility was established in 1934. It was designed to study the impacts of a variety of land uses on our mountain watersheds. This 5,750-acre research site is located on several sub-watersheds of Coweeta creek. Thirty-two weirs and other facilities were constructed to allow precise measurements of water flow and sediment deposits; seventeen of those weirs are currently operational. A control watershed was established, and a variety of practices have been placed on several other watersheds. Long-term weather and air quality records have also been maintained.

In 1980, the lab began participating in Long Term Ecological Research (LTER) in cooperation with the University of Georgia. This work is funded by the National Science Foundation. This long-term project is an integral part of the Coweeta research effort. There are 21 LTER sites in the United States, and Coweeta was one of the original sites.

Several aspects of the research conducted at this site have direct application to Haywood County. For example, Coweeta research helped "write the book" about road construction and maintenance practices on steep, forested lands. Having this internationally recognized knowledge and experience in our backyard is an outstanding resource as Haywood County wrestles with the issue of how

to reduce the impacts of mountain subdivisions on our water quality.

Another special value is the long-term nature of this research. A good example is a small watershed that was cable logged in 1977. All the timber was removed, leaving no buffers. The watershed quickly reforested. However, the effect on the stream can still be clearly seen. The water runs clear much of the time. However, the legacy sediment from the "no-buffer" practices still has adverse effects on the biological productivity of this stream.

Coweeta scientists have also been working with organizations like the Little Tennessee Watershed Association to assess the effectiveness of certain Best Management Practices. Their research will enable us to better predict the effectiveness of buffers of varying widths.

Coweeta scientists recently made some projections about the watershed impacts of the increased development in western North Carolina. This information can help us anticipate our water quality future.

Everyone appreciated the welcome extended by the folks at the Lab. The Experiment Station is open to the public. The phone number for the Lab is 828-524-2128.



# CALENDAR

- August 15-17:** SRI Stream Restoration Conference  
Broyhill Inn and Conf. Ctr. -- Boone, NC
- September 5:** 8:00 am -- HWA Board Meeting -- SWRC&D Office  
Waynesville, 367 Dellwood Road
- September 12:** 7:00 pm -- HWA ExComm Meeting -- SWRC&D Office  
Waynesville, 367 Dellwood Road
- September 16:** Big Sweep -- TBA
- October 3:** 8:00 am -- HWA Board Meeting --SWRC&D Office  
Waynesville, 367 Dellwood Road
- October 10:** 7:00 pm -- HWA ExComm Meeting -- SWRC&D Office  
Waynesville, 367 Dellwood Road
- November 7:** 8:00 am -- HWA Board Meeting SWRC&D Office  
Waynesville, 367 Dellwood Road
- November 14:** HWA ExComm Meeting -- SWRC&D Office  
Waynesville, 367 Dellwood Road

# Lake Logan Is Truly Saved

Some of the last steps in completing one of the most creative conservation efforts in the country have recently been completed. About 3,900 acres of the 4,400-acre Champion property on the Upper Pigeon watershed has been conveyed to the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission, the Episcopal Church, and the Boy Scouts of America. The balance of the property is scheduled to be conveyed to the USDA-Forest Service later this summer.

In an effort that required

unprecedented partnerships and an outstanding commitment to a common goal, some of the most special lands in the country have been protected in perpetuity. While hundreds of individuals and dozens of organizations contributed to this project, the leadership of the Save Lake Logan committee was outstanding.

The vision of the WNC Sportsman Club, the leadership of Bob Brannon and C. W. Hardin, and the coordinated efforts of many individuals and organizations is what made this

a reality. Haywood Waterways is proud of the involvement of many of its members in their untiring efforts to leave a lasting legacy to future generations. Being able to contribute in some small way to such an outstanding accomplishment has been a rare privilege.



*Prayer for Lake Logan*  
O God, since the beginning of creation you have spoken to your people on mountains and in lofty places. Grant us, in the power of your Holy Spirit, a clear discernment of your purposes for Lake Logan, that by our faithful and wise stewardship it may be a place where your people gather for re-creation, to hear your Word, and grow in the knowledge and love of the risen Christ from generation to generation. Amen

# Technical Advisory Committee Hosts Water Quality Forums

May was a busy month for the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC). They hosted four public forums about non-point pollution in the Pigeon River watershed. Leslie Smathers presented the latest information about the nature and sources of sediment for Lower Pigeon. Lynne Newton did the same for Upper Pigeon, Dave Dudek for Richland Creek, and Scott Loftis for Jonathan Creek. Other TAC members helped with displays, refreshments, discussions, and other activities. The presentation was based on information from VWIN water quality sampling, IBI data (biological sampling), and the HWA inventory of non-point sources. The two leading causes of sediment are eroding stream banks and unpaved roads. Eroding stream banks were the largest contributors in Upper Pigeon and Richland Creek. Unpaved roads were the most significant sources in the lower Pigeon and Jonathan Creek watersheds.

Meeting attendance varied greatly. However, participants at every session provided

helpful information about ways to increase public understanding and support of these water quality issues. As a result of these meetings, HWA members made several additional presentations during the month, with more planned. In addition, several good points were made about actions that

appear to have been beneficial in the past as well as what might be done to address the rapid changes occurring in our watersheds. Several landowners indicated an interest in learning more about the technical and financial assistance that is currently available to address concerns

on their own properties.

The next steps include contacting interested landowners, completing a written draft of a watershed action plan, and securing grant funds for implementing Best Management Practices. If you have any questions, please contact Gordon Small at 828-452-3323.

# HWA School Mini-Grants

HWA awarded mini-grants to 11 Haywood County Schools. The funds will be used for teaching aids and field trips to enhance water quality education.

The majority of the funds will be used to purchase equipment such as water testing kits, waders, nets, stream models reference books and other aquatic testing equipment. The equipment and field trips will help teachers provide hands-on learning experiences for Haywood County students. Most schools received \$300. A supplemental grant of \$400 was also given to the new



Dick Alexander presents the Bethel Elementary School mini-grant to Tracey Fowler.

Clyde Elementary School to help them develop and outdoor classroom and improve a stream bank on school property. The total

amount HWA budgeted for the mini-grant program is \$4,500. The funds were part of an education grant provided by the Pigeon River Fund.

## Kids In The Creek

(Continued From Front Page)  
opportunity to learn by doing. They performed a variety of activities that improve water quality and wildlife habitat.

Additional classroom preparation was provided by the Haywood Soil and Water Conservation District and TVA. The district staff conducted an excellent presentation on watersheds, soil erosion and the resulting soil related water quality problems.

The EnviroScape watershed model was used to explain erosion problems and the use of Best Management Practices. TVA gave an informative slide presentation that explained the Kids in the Creek program and told students about the things they would see and the data to be collected.

This year's event was held May 5 at the Town of Canton's Recreation Park. Canton Middle School eighth grade students planted trees, made

river bank repairs, planted ground cover, put up wood duck nesting boxes, and built steps down to the river. This is just the beginning of our partnership with the Town of Canton. Our long range goal is to continue working with the town on park improvements with future Kids in the Creek events.

One very special aspect of Kids in the Creek is the cooperation among many organizations and volunteers

that make it happen. The Pigeon River Fund, Haywood County Schools administrators and teachers, Haywood Community College, NC Cooperative Extension Service, Town of Canton, Haywood County Swift Water Rescue Team, Haywood Soil and Water Conservation District, and TVA all teamed up with HWA for a great learning experience. The HWA Board of Directors thanks you all!



P.O. Box 389, Waynesville, NC 28786



### Board of Directors

William M. Eaker  
*President*  
David Dudek  
*Vice President*  
Ronald J. Moser  
*Treasurer*  
Robin Minick  
*Secretary*  
Leslie Smathers  
Charles Schaefer  
David H. Ashe  
Pink Francis  
Jennifer Pratt  
Dr. Mark Jaben  
Zora L. Rhodes  
Joetta Rinehart  
Steve West

**Staff**  
Ronald J. Moser  
*Director*  
Gordon Small  
*Project Manager*

TO:

Our Thanks to the Pigeon River Fund for supporting HWA



**You Can Help To Save Your Waterways**  
**Join Haywood Waterways Association, Inc.**  
Annual Membership Application



Name \_\_\_\_\_ Home Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ Business Phone \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_ Fax \_\_\_\_\_

Profession/Occupation/Organization \_\_\_\_\_ EMail \_\_\_\_\_

### Work Worth Doing

**Check Annual Membership Category:** ( ) Family \$20 ( ) Individual \$15 ( ) Student \$10 ( ) Business--5 employees or less \$30  
( ) Organization \$30 ( ) Sponsor \$50 ( ) Donor \$100 ( ) Benefactor \$500

**Write Check Payable to:** Haywood Waterways Association, Inc.,

**Mail To :** Haywood Waterways Association, Inc. PO Box 389, Waynesville, NC 28786. Phone: (828)452-9077 or (828)452-3323

**Web Site:** www.haywoodwaterways.org -- **E-Mail:** ronmoser@asap-com.com or gordons891@aol.com